

News from SALEM COUNTY Office of Public Information

Mr. Robin B. Weinstein, Public Information Officer Office Phone: (856) 935-7510 ext. 8202

After Hours: (856) 297-5433

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 9, 2008

FREEHOLDERS APPOINT MEMBERS TO TOURISM ADVISORY COUNCIL AND HIRE MARKETING CONSULTANT

(SALEM, NJ)—Freeholder Beth Timberman, Chair of the County Planning and Transportation Committee, today announced that the Board of Chosen Freeholders appointed members to the first Salem County Tourism Advisory Council at their regular meeting on May 7, 2008. The purpose of the Council is to work with business, industry, municipalities and other groups interested in encouraging the growth of tourism in Salem County.

"We were very pleased with the number of County residents who submitted their letters of interest; it made it a difficult to pick out nine members," said Freeholder Timberman, member of the Council. "We sought to have representation from throughout the County with various backgrounds and we are confident that the mix of people appointed will serve the County well in promoting tourism."

The Tourism Advisory Council consists of ten members with one Freeholder. Members, with the exception of the first appointed members, shall serve a term of three years. Terms of the first members of the Council shall be staggered; three shall be for a one year term, three for a two-year term, and three for a three-year term.

The members appointed are: Brian Duffy (Mannington), Jennifer Jones (City of Salem/Salem County Chamber of Commerce), Joseph Hiles (Pilesgrove), Ed Masker (Alloway), Scott Donnini (Pilesgrove), Alice Percheski (Carney's Point), Deborah Turner-Fox (Pittsgrove), and Rebecca Gower Call (Salem).

Ex-officio members were also appointed and include: Robin Weinstein (Deputy County Administrator/Public Information Officer), Earl R. Gage (County Administrator/Clerk of the Board), Dr. Jim Turk (County Arts Director), and Mr. James Waddington (Economic Development Director).

In addition to appointing members to the Tourism Advisory Council, Freeholders approved a contract to hire Lee Tofanelli and Associates as the Marketing Consultant for Salem County. The contract awarded in the amount of \$57,000, the lowest bid of three proposals, is aimed at implementing the first of a three year marketing plan designed by Tofanelli and Associates for the County.

"When the plan was being developed many people were interviewed from throughout the County and the number one thing that they wanted was follow-through," said Freeholder Timberman. "The contract awarded tonight sends a clear message that we are serious about developing the tourism industry in Salem County. We are confident that we will get a good rate of return on this investment in our future. Tourism is a clean industry that will provide jobs and will not adversely affect our way of life in Salem County."

The consultant during the next year will work with the Advisory Council in developing an overall theme and to integrate its use into promotional packages which will be used to follow-up requests for information. Additionally, the consultant is to enhance and coordinate current marketing efforts, design a new County logo with an advertising theme, prepare a shooting schedule for commercials, and develop a photo bank for advertisements. Other duties include designing advertisements for newsprint, magazine, television, radio, and billboards.

"The fact is that we do not have the in-house resources to accomplish the tasks outlined in the plan with the degree of professionalism that is required to compete in a multibillion dollar industry," said Freeholder Timberman. "The consultant, working with the Council and Public Information Officer, will seek to brand Salem County in a way that appeals to residents, businesses, and the fifteen municipalities in a way that will ensure that everyone gets a piece of the pie."